



THE MESSENGER'S

SENTENCE:

POEMS

WILLIAM LINVILLE



HAUMEA  
1995

THE MESSENGER'S SENTENCE  
Poems by William Linville  
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The chronic dream  
Of the selfish  
Is genocide.  
They are not me,  
Not mine,  
They should die.  
Their difference  
Is unbearable.

God gave this land  
To my ancestors.  
They had none,  
Nor a decent god.

Look at my hair,  
My eyes, my skin,  
See the beauty  
Of my children.

The ugliness  
Of those others  
Soils my world.

Ascepsis,  
Purification,  
With clean hands  
And a pure heart  
I reach  
For the future



---

On The Election of Tories

It was one of those dreams  
Of the Other Land.  
Leni and I  
Were riding  
The Black Motorcycle  
Through tree crowded streets  
Towards the mountains.

Be careful, she said,  
You know the danger  
In making a turn  
To the Right.

It's the bike,  
I told her,  
Something  
About the steering.

We swung wide,  
Into the Right,  
Crossing traffic,  
Cutting everything.

Oh, she moaned,  
You collaborated  
With the bent machine,

That old ditch  
Is bottomless.

Habman  
4044 Paga Circle  
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Remember

My Granny told me  
That virginity  
Regenerates  
In the seven year cycle  
Of the Hazel tree.

I am tired of prostitution,  
Weary with theatrical lies.

I abjure the Corporation,  
Reseal my finestrations,  
Mix my poetic medication  
Under Granny's Tree.

I shall yet be free.

---

Dr. Fix

We need more doctors.  
Any group preventing  
Their education  
Is the enemy of the people.

If it is a group,  
Abolish it.  
If it is one person,  
Exile him.

Educate doctors,  
Assign practices,  
Pay a decent wage,  
With rewards and fines  
To encourage  
Continuing education.

Educate  
The popular perception:  
Doctors like Chefs,  
Hairdressers,  
Airbus Pilots.  
They learn skills and go on working  
To become more human  
As they age.

Our present way  
Is a superstition  
Retarding the quality  
Of our lives.



---

Victims

The soldiers  
Of the Corporate Ranks  
Are people too,  
So as they fight  
The Corporation's Wars  
Against the people  
They are like clowns  
Hitting each other  
With spikey clubs  
Because the Ringmaster  
Thinks it will  
Cause the crowd to laugh.

Odd clowns  
Projecting their pain.

There is, after all  
Only one place to live,  
One set of needs.

---

Henry Ford said:

At any time  
I can buy  
Half the American People  
To kill the other half.

Listen to that.  
Leave to the powerful  
The symbols of their power,  
Never contest for that.  
Watch to know  
Who sets your needs  
And why.  
Question everything.

The powerful parade  
To rouse your envy.  
Try your best,  
You'll never  
Join them.

Find your frontier,  
Flee your indenture.

They will follow  
In their machinery  
Of confusion,  
Smoke, lights,  
Naked bodies,  
They move slowly.  
Be swift and free.

Henry Ford also said:  
I never went to school.  
I'm not an engineer.  
I'm not a scientist.  
I don't have  
To know these things.  
I can buy  
The people who do,  
And make them  
Fight each other  
To be bought.

Ford made infants cry  
And husbands  
Strike their wives.

He conspired with death,  
And bent the minds  
Of all those  
Who called him Boss.

Devil, Hero, God,  
What awful texture  
Within us  
Squeezes out  
Our Fords.

Puzzle it out  
Before it kills you.



---

Notes On Husbandry

Before John Brown,  
Colonel Olcott  
Had gone to Iowa  
Where he practiced  
Intensive Agriculture.  
He said:  
Don't eat your seed corn,  
Don't butcher your brood sow,  
Be content with a sufficiency,  
Last your life without want.

Profit takers make no product,  
Except in spoiled lives,  
But clever Managers  
Never understand why.

Olcott said:  
As he ascended the scaffold  
John Brown's eyes  
Were lightning and thunder  
In prairie skies.

## Veblenesquery

Clearly,  
The Old Woman Said,  
The secret rule  
Of The Corporate State  
Has failed  
As utterly  
As any tyrant's rule  
In human history.

The Human Family  
Alone is preserved,  
Defending  
Trade and Craft,  
Detesting  
The autocrat's rule,  
The self appointed  
Nobility.

---

TV CRITIC

Once you've eliminated  
All the easy answers  
Whatever's left  
No matter how difficult  
Is probably true.

Literature,  
The Theatre,  
Comedy or Tragedy,  
Strengthened  
And ennobled  
The Audience  
For three thousand years,  
As necessary to the people  
As their food,  
Or the gods.

But in television  
Nothing nourishes,  
There is no content.

We watched it  
As it was removed  
With purpose, intention,  
Speed, and completeness  
Whenever it appeared.

Why do you suppose  
That was done?



---

Oratorio

In Philip's Cave,  
The weft  
Of recollection,  
I trade tales with  
Volpiel,  
The Wolf of Angels.

I speak  
Of Mohammed's wrestling  
For The Surahs  
In Gabriel's Cave.

He tells  
Of the blue and silver star  
Hanging yet  
In Hagia Sofia's dome.

Some, he said,  
Shaking out  
His great grey wings,  
Never quit.

His smile is full of fangs,  
And his eyes are summer  
And deep snow.  
He radiates the deep of space,  
And a hint  
Of blue and silver.

Show us, Wolf,  
How not to quit.

(A Philipo Neri)

In preparing the war  
Against fascism  
We became fascists.

In our opposition  
To Soviet Imperialism  
We made our empire.

Now in the war  
Against Corporate exploitation,  
Their War Against The People,  
We must not make  
Those mistakes again.

Oppose them  
With their opposite

Our strategy  
Must be  
Individual and human.

Our opposition  
Diverse  
And uncooperative.

Analyze their lies  
And dissolve them.

From illusion  
Move to life.

Responsibly consume  
Their irresponsibility,  
Deplete their lies.

---

Remember

The evening before  
The president  
Spoke on the radio  
Assuring us  
That he had no intention  
To invade Cambodia.

The following morning  
He invaded  
Following  
Intense bombing.

We went to  
The president  
Of the University  
Asking permission  
To demonstrate.

He called the police.

At the Square,  
Before the gates,  
We met police,  
The National Guard,  
And plain clothes others.

Batons,  
Gas,  
The end of childhood



---

Notes On Progress

Was it Dr. Toynbee who said:  
Unless the will be engaged  
There is only cyclic randomness?  
And:  
With comet-like return  
War cuts and sears  
The human segments.

Those drifters and losers,  
Excluded from the mainstream,  
Bald shade-tree-sitters,  
Old Greek duffers  
Seducing the young,  
The unorthodox  
Young Rabbi  
From the Kibbutz near  
Nazareth.  
Italian mopers  
Who drop out of commerce  
Keeping wolves  
In Plato's Cave,  
They all fled  
The gearwheels  
Of confusion,  
The random comet,  
The falling sky.

At the proper joining  
Of cycles  
Dr. Toynbee recanted,  
But it moved.

## A Note On American Place Names

When  
You've got  
A whole continent  
To map and name  
There's no wonder  
So many place names  
Are  
Paradiddle  
Spelled Backwards.

I had to do the same  
To save my business.

When the children got sick  
They didn't know  
Where to find  
The Super Candy Corporation,  
So they broke my windows.

And I can't find a chocolate bar  
Anywhere.

---

Notes To The Old

Once the trumpeting  
And breeding  
Is done

What is he good for  
Under the sun

An atavism  
Of the  
Sexual scism

An emptied  
Vessicle  
Of  
The evolving  
Gism

Whatever is left  
Is life's  
Added on sum

Now that  
The mating is past  
Let's get on  
With some fun  
That will last.

At the proper joining  
Of cycles  
Dr. Toynbee recounted,  
But it moved.



---

Remember Chocolate?

I made chocolate bars  
Out of milk, sugar, and chocolate.  
Each piece cost  
Ten cents to make.  
I sold them for fifteen.

I made a nickel,  
And I was happy.  
People loved my chocolate.  
They lingered gossiping.  
They called me by name.

I put in a coffee counter.  
I made a nickel  
On that too.

The guy across the street  
Saw all this  
But he didn't understand.

It is human honesty  
Which holds society  
Together.

He made something,  
Out of wax, color, chemicals.  
He called it Super Candy.  
He wrapped it in foil  
And sold it  
For a dollar.  
It cost two cents a pound  
For him to make.

I had to do the same  
To save my business.

When the children got sick  
They didn't know  
Where to find  
The Super Candy Corporation,  
So they broke my windows.

And I can't find a chocolate bar  
Anywhere.

---

## Business Is Business

The Chocolate Bar Principle  
One introduced  
Is applied  
To anything marketed.

All food, clothing,  
Any mechanism,  
Electrical or electronic.  
Imponderables,  
Cars, trucks, boats,  
Houses.

Education, training,  
Medical care.  
It is the cause  
Of the strange unsatisfying  
Texture of our lives.

Materials and craftsmanship  
Grow cheaper and flimsier.  
The life of usefulness  
Of any purchased object  
Grows shorter and shorter  
And its price goes up and up.

Overhead down, profits up,  
Life grows shabbier  
And more tawdry.

Nothing works,  
Nobody can fix it,  
Nobody  
Will talk about it.

---

"A"

The only purpose  
Of any government  
Is the protection  
And assistance  
Of the individual Citizen,  
Without any modifiers.

Common sense  
Knows that corporations,  
Legal fictions,  
Are not real citizens.

Human members  
Of any corporation  
Must be held responsible  
For the crimes of the corporation.

We opposed  
The foolish obfuscations  
Of the Medieval Church.

We fought rational revolutions  
Against the shabby mysticism  
Of repressive monarchies.

We won these struggles,  
For once their nature  
Is clearly shown,  
Nothing can save the tyrant  
From the anger of the people.



## "B"

Not all equally strong,  
 Not all equally rich,  
 All equal  
 In single responsibility.

Equally I put up my share,  
 Equally I take mine.  
 Equal in receiving,  
 Giving  
 According to physical limits.

Juror and Judge,  
 Teacher or Governor,  
 Soldier,  
 Or Social Worker.  
 Not hoarding wealth  
 Not denying  
 Necessity.

---

"C"

The profits  
Of the corporation  
Limited

According to multiples  
Of members responsibility.

Judges content with that,  
The citizens happy with it.

Balanced maintenance  
Of a good life  
Assured every citizen.

Competition directed  
To personal growth.  
Each life fulfilled  
At last,  
In its own best way.

For thousands of years  
We have hungered for this.

Look closely,  
Resist the first impulse.

A done thing  
Likely has a deer,  
A notice

(Towards The After).

Now Drink,  
Cowboy!!!

---

Speculation

If The Lord Buddha  
Had been Irish  
He would  
Have stood  
In the middle  
Of the Brawl  
And shouted  
Stop it,  
You silly bastards,  
I've come to tell you  
That you don't have to struggle  
Any more.

But he wasn't,  
So he didn't,  
So far as I know.



---

Hearst's Old Sweet Song

The Boston Massacre or  
Concord Bridge, I guess  
And then Impressment  
Of Yankee Sailors.

(Hoots) The firing on Fort Sumpter,  
The sinking of The Maine,  
The Lusitania,

(Shots) Pearl Harbor was bigger,  
And The Fifty Miles To Pusan,  
On The Coast,

(Shouting) And The Gulf of Tonkin.  
(Killing a president)

(Whistles) Then less distinct cause,  
Bombs and threats of bombs,  
Air Liners in jeopardy,  
Pirated Tour Ships.

(Cracking) (Burning a city)

(Whips) Marines at Beirut.

Burned out Cafe,

(Slowly) Oil lines cut.

(A cureless disease).

(The) The Oklahoma Bomb

(Balky) (Motive)?

(Herd) Look closely,

Resist the first impulse.

(Moves)

(Through) A done thing

(the) Likely has a doer,

(Dust) A motive

(Towards The River).

Now Drink,  
Cowboy!!!

# Notes From Ambrose Bierce

When your leader  
 Calles you to war  
 Kill him first  
 Then go and make peace  
 With his enemy.

When your leader  
 Tells you  
 To fight for peace  
 Show him  
 How to die  
 For life.

When your leader  
 Calls you a hero  
 For defending  
 Your family,  
 Thank him  
 Before  
 You shoot him.

A leader  
 Exhorting his people  
 To do violence,  
 In whatever cause,  
 Is a plague of rats  
 In the nursery.

Remove him  
 For the good  
 Of the children.

---

Perspective

In the world  
Under Heaven  
There is  
Cause and effect.  
But Interresponsibility  
Splits as many ways  
As actors inhabit context.

The self excusing know  
That  
Situations alter cases.

If I burden you  
Until you break  
And strike me,  
Never expect me  
To acknowledge  
That cause.  
Only saints do that,  
The rest of us  
See more clearly,  
At least  
The length  
Of our noses.



# In The Cornerstone.

Complete Ignorance  
Depends upon  
The curse  
Of making  
Not only  
The wrong choice  
Every time,  
But it must be  
The most stupid  
Totally appositve  
Choice possible.

Our inheritance  
Is rich  
In that.

Remove him  
For the good  
Of the children.

---

My Resignation

What can the farmer  
Expect  
From the apple tree  
Other than  
Apples?

What does the fisherman  
Expect  
From the sea  
Other than  
Fish?

Looking at the sea,  
Or the apple tree  
The mind might make  
An inference.

What can you  
Expect  
Of your mind?

~~WW~~  
LIVING  
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